loopholes in the law so as to bear cyber logs in Government schools and institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) The Information Technology (IT) Act 2000 has necessary provisions to deal with cyber crimes in the country. However, as a result of fast technological developments taking place in the information technology sector and the medium of Internet such statute is needed to harmonise with those developments.

(c) There is rapid technology development in the Information Technology sector and the Internet. The convergence of computers, communications and the content has made it possible to combine several functions in one device and thereby offer affordable multi-purpose gadgets to the clients.

It is through creating awareness and educating the children in schools and colleges and the public, in addition to legislative measures that wrong use of such wonderful devices could be avoided.

(d) Department of Information Technology has set up an Expert Committee to review the IT Act 2000 in the light of the post—IT Act 2000 developments and recommend appropriate amendments to the IT Act, 2000.

Telephone facilities in rural areas

†2497. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a fund was set up few years back for accelerating the pace of providing telephone facilities in rural areas by charging five per cent tax on gross revenue from telephone operators;

(b) if so, the amount deposited in the said fund till December, 2004; and

(c) the average amount deposited annually in this fund during last years and the average amount withdrawn and spent from this fund on telephone facilities in rural areas?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) A Fund named as Universal Services Obligation Fund (USO) has been set up with effect from 01-04-2002 for providing subsidy to make telephone in rural areas available at affordable cost. This fund is non-lapsable and is under the control of the Central Government and the resources allocated to the Fund are to be used for making access to basic telegraph services to people in rural and remote areas at affordable and reasonable rates.

While the Department collects a non-tax levy called Universal Service Levy (USL) from specified telecom service providers [Basic, Cellular, Unified Access Service License (UASL), National Long Distance, International Long Distance, Very small Satellite Aperture (VSAT), Internet Protocol (IP-II), Public Mobile Radio Trunk Service (PMRTS) @ 5% of their Adjusted Gross Revenue as a part of the total revenue share payable by them towards License Fee to the Government, the amounts collected are credited to the Consolidated Fund of India (CFI). The USO Fund is credited with such amounts as are approved by the Parliament for appropriation from the Consolidated Fund of India from time to time.

(b) and (c) The details of amount collected from the operators towards USL and funds allocated and subsidy disbursed from USO Fund for the years 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05 is given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

The details of amount collected from the operators towards USL and Funds allocated and subsidy disbursed from USO

Year	Amount collected from the operators towards USL	Funds allocated to USO Fund	Subsidy disbursed by USO Fund
2002-03	1,653	300	300
2003-04	2,144	200	200
2004-05	2,899*	1,200	1,200
Total:	6,696	1,700	1,700

*Till February, 2005.